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FLOOR DEBATE

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understand where he's coming from, but we just can't...we just can't start down this path of accepting amendments on this bill. The...the legislation has been drafted pretty tightly to do the things we think it has to do. And so I'm going to oppose that amendment. I was going to read you a little something I think holds some significance, especially after the debate on Monday, because it seemed like that there were those in here who were trying to claim that ethanol was costing us and we weren't getting anything from it. Here's a General Accounting Office release in November of 2000 that finds that the federal tax breaks provided to the petroleum industry totaled nearly \$150 billion over the last three decades in contrast to \$11.5 billion available to the ethanol industry since 1979; \$150 billion to the petroleum industry, \$11.5 billion to the ethanol industry. These findings also echo the conclusions of a 1996 report published by the Institute of Local Self-Reliance, entitled "Oil Slickers, How Petroleum Benefits At The Taxpayers Expense", which conservatively estimates the tax cost to petroleum to \$3.7 billion per year. This request...this report was requested by Senator Tom Harkin, from Iowa, a senator from Iowa, and I think it's telling. If we are spending that much money and most of that is in hidden costs that you don't know about, but \$150 billion over the last 30 years to the petroleum industry compared to \$11.5 billion over the last 12 years to the...or 22 years for the ethanol industry. I think we have...and you have in front of you now a little booklet that Senator Cunningham had placed there that has some excellent points that you can read as to how they...how the...how the ethanol industry benefits our economy. There's no question, there's no question that this is a plus for our...for our nation, this ethanol production. And I would urge your support of the legislation and continuing down the road we started last Monday with rejecting the amendments that would take the bill and start to take it apart. Thank you.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Senator Bruning.

SENATOR BRUNING: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, this amendment in no way is intended to bring down LB 536. I'm a big supporter of ethanol, I am a big supporter of this bill and I will do everything I can, including voting for everything